

## EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH ON LITERACY FOR TPQ BUSTANUL ULUM SEJATI STUDENTS IN THE MAPAK BELATUNG AREA MATARAM

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62567/micjo.v2i1.395>

Article info:

Submitted: 25/12/24

Accepted: 06/01/25

Published: 30/01/25

### Abstract

The unrestricted use of mobile phones by elementary school children to access social media and online games can be disastrous for them. This greatly affects their literacy skills, leading to suboptimal development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This community service program aims to raise awareness and motivate the students of TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati to improve their literacy skills. The method used in this community service activity was lectures and discussions. The activity received a positive response from the TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati students and their parents. The program was conducted through material presentations and discussions using a relaxed conversational approach, making the activity feel less formal and more comfortable. This atmosphere allowed all the students to express their opinions without hesitation. This activity left a positive impression on the participants about the importance of literacy and avoiding excessive use of mobile phones to access social media and online games.

**Keywords :** *Literacy, Motivation, mobile phones, social media, game online*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a key driver of a country's economic growth. Hanushek & Wobmann (2013) stated that the indicator of education that influences economic growth is not merely the percentage of people receiving formal education but the cognitive abilities of the population resulting from education. Moretti & Frandell (2013) emphasized that education should enable individuals to comprehend, read, write, and calculate. These life skills, as outlined by Moretti & Frandell, are broadly translated into the term literacy.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes the slogan "Literacy for All." This emphasizes that every individual has the right to be "literate" as a foundation for navigating life. Literacy empowers individuals, families, and communities to improve their quality of life. Furthermore, literacy has a multiplier effect, such as eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality, and ensuring sustainable development, peace, and democracy (UNESCO, 2014).

A 2012 UNESCO survey revealed that Indonesia's reading index was 0.001, meaning that out of every 1,000 Indonesians, only one reads seriously. This placed Indonesia as the second-lowest ranking, just above Botswana in Africa. The World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2015 also released a report on essential skills for the 21st century, which include literacy, competence, and character. Additionally, The World's Most Literate Nations (WMLN) survey in 2016 ranked Indonesia 60th out of 61 countries, with Finland, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, and Sweden occupying the top five spots. The low literacy culture in Indonesia has hindered the nation's education from advancing compared to other countries.

The literacy program is crucial for societal progress and prosperity. It offers significant benefits, particularly in broadening knowledge and understanding, which fosters creative, progressive, and solution-oriented thinking in addressing life challenges. A literacy program inspires individuals to generate positive ideas for initiating change and driving future progress.

The importance of literacy is not fully understood by society. That is evidenced by the still-low interest in reading. The more books people read, the more knowledge and insights they gain. For example, farmers who read books on agriculture can improve their farming techniques and land management. Similarly, homemakers who read about cooking and health can enhance their knowledge of nutrition, recipes, and overall wellness. The lack of literacy in communities adversely affects their quality of life.

The literacy program serves as a critical asset for a nation to advance and compete globally. It should be instilled in society to foster awareness among individuals, gradually making literacy a growing and ingrained culture.

Building a literacy culture within society is not a simple task. The rapid development of telecommunication media, such as mobile phones, and the pervasive influence of social media present challenges that must be addressed. Mobile phones and social media have become an inseparable part of daily life. Browsing social media via mobile phones has emerged as a new cultural phenomenon overshadowing society. From youth to the elderly, everyone possesses a mobile phone and social media account, allowing seamless communication. Moreover, the widespread accessibility of online games through mobile phones diminishes the reading interest among younger generations. This phenomenon often leads individuals absorbed to spend hours in their mobile phones.

If left unchecked, this trend could become a major issue, hampering the quality of societal development. It shifts people attention from reading to social media browsing and online gaming. Thus, people are shifted from productive activities to less productive activities. This lowers the quality and productivity of daily activities. Furthermore, this can shape people's

character becomes individual because this makes people become engrossed in solitary activities without real-world interaction.

The phenomenon mentioned above is being sight across both urban and rural communities, including the Mapak Belatung area of Jempong Baru Village in the Sekarbela District of Mataram. Elementary and middle school-aged children in this area have become adept at using mobile phones and navigating social media, with many spending considerable time on social media and online games. If this trend persists, it will negatively impact their character development.

The negative effects of excessive social media use and online gaming include reduced face-to-face interaction, internet addiction, conflicts, privacy issues, a decrease in productive activities, and susceptibility to negative influences. These factors significantly affect children's character development.

To address this phenomenon, cooperation among community members, literacy advocates, and government officials is necessary to initiate gradual change. This change should focus on raising awareness about the importance of literacy, which serves as a means to build a higher-quality and more prosperous society.

Based on the issues outlined above, the objective of this community service activity is to raise awareness among the TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati students about the importance and role of literacy program in creating knowledgeable and creative generations. Additionally, it aims to educate them about the negative effects of excessive mobile phone use for social media and online gaming.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literacy program was conducted at TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati, located in the Mapak Belatung area, Jempong Baru Village, Sekarbela District, Mataram. The program was implemented over the course of one month, from March 16, 2024, to April 13, 2024. The activities were held every Saturday night on a week. The methods used in this program included lectures, discussions, and storytelling. The tools employed during the activities included markers, a whiteboard, erasers, reading books, and notebooks.

The literacy activities began with participants gathering and forming small circles, followed by introductions by both the facilitators and the participants attending the program. The activities included listening to material presented by the facilitators, reading books, recounting the contents of the books read, explaining pictures, and engaging in discussions. The program ended with educational sessions on the negative effects of excessive mobile phone use for accessing social media and online games. Additionally, rewards were given to active participants, and keepsakes were distributed to all attendees as tokens of appreciation.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service activity was warmly received by the community, especially by parents and children. The program successfully reduced unproductive and less positive activities that children often engage in during their daily lives. It provided education about the importance of literacy awareness, particularly fostering a love for reading. As a result, the children gained motivation and strong awareness of the benefits of reading. Additionally, the program educated them on the negative effects of excessive mobile phone use for accessing social media game online.

A reading community was established at TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati, where children typically learn to read the Qur'an. After their Qur'an lessons, the children read books provided

at the TPQ. This initiative transformed the TPQ into not only a place for learning to read the Qur'an but also a venue for gathering and reading books together.

The results achieved represent the planned outputs of several activities, which are described as follows:

#### 1. Material delivery

In this initial activity, all students were guided to understand what literacy is and the benefits of engaging in literacy program. This activity aimed to explore the students' understanding of literacy. The facilitator then provided a shared understanding of literacy to the students. The delivery of material was conducted in a serious but relaxed manner. This approach meant that while the facilitator discussed the material in depth, they also interspersed the discussion with topics related to the students' daily activities and how these relate to literacy. This method kept the students engaged and helped them comprehend literacy in a comprehensive and meaningful way.



#### 2. Reading book

Fostering a love for reading books is the primary goal of this community service activity. Therefore, several activities supporting this objective were carried out to the fullest extent. The reading book activity was conducted in several stages. It began with a 10-minute reading session, followed by participants taking turns sharing what they had read. Not all students were able or confident enough to share their stories in front of their peers. In such cases, the facilitator or mentor provided motivation to build their confidence in speaking or storytelling in front of others. In the final session of this reading book activity there was a Q&A or discussion segment. The facilitator acted as the guide for the discussion and occasionally posed questions related to the stories shared or other relevant topics. This activity provided the participants with a new experience and educated them on how reading books can expand their knowledge and give them the courage to express their opinions.



**Picture 2. Reading book and discussion**

### 3. Explaining picture

The activity of explaining pictures aims to develop the students' imagination and their ability to interpret or explain images they have drawn. This activity involved two main steps: first, drawing something according to their own preferences. Second, interpreting or explaining what they had drawn. Through this activity, all students were guided to enhance their imagination and presentation skills. During the session, each student was asked to invite their peers to provide interpretations of the drawing before the creator of the picture explained its meaning or significance.



**Picture 3. Explaining picture**

### 4. Providing motivation

After completing the series of activities, all students were invited to reflect on the activities they had participated in. This was done to build their awareness of the importance and benefits gained from these activities, fostering a desire to continue practicing them even after the community service program concluded. The facilitator then encouraged and motivated the students to remain steadfast in applying what they had learned and experienced during the program. At the end of the session, the facilitator provided education on the negative effects of excessive mobile phone use for accessing social media and playing online games. This served as both a reminder and an educational effort to help students reduce such behaviors and choose more beneficial activities.



## 5. CONCLUTION

This community service program brought a fresh atmosphere to the students of TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati. It transformed TPQ Bustanul Ulum Sejati into more than just a place for learning to read the Qur'an and studying Islamic religion. It became a venue for broadening insight, increasing awareness, and fostering a love for reading. The activities conducted during the program educated all students to develop a habit of reading, engaging in discussions, thinking creatively, and reducing excessive use of mobile phones for social media and online gaming. Consequently, these activities can serve as daily inspirations for the students to help them create a better future.

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